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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT
FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Mistletoe" -- information from Forest Service,
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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It hath been writ that any manne
May blameless kiss the mayde he canne
Nor anyone shall say him "no"
Beneath the holye mistletoe

So sang the poet. And for centuries....a sprig of mistletoe...hanging over the doorway...has been a part of the traditional Christmas decoration in our homes. It has added to the gaiety of countless Yuletide parties.

The common mistletoe of Great Britain and Eurasia--celebrated in the rites of the ancient Druids---does not grow in this country. Perhaps that is unfortunate because it is the handsomest species of all.

Our native mistletoes are parasitic shrubs. They belong to two different genera. Only one, however, has any ornamental value. The species we use for Christmas decoration belong to the botanical genus Phoradendron. In Greek that means "tree-borne"....or according to some..."tree thief". They are characterized by broad leaves--either yellowish or dark green in color. And they have white gummy berries.

Mistletoes occur abundantly...especially through the South, Southwest and West. About 90 percent of the mistletoe in the eastern markets comes from Texas and Oklahoma. California supplies most of the needs for mistletoe on the western market.

Early in December...farm families go into the woods and gather the mistletoe. They use long poles to poke it loose from the branches and boles of the trees. It grows on tall oak, cottonwood, hackberry and Osage-orange trees. Usually the farm families just pack it in barrels for shipment to the market. In the deep South, they use Spanish moss to protect the mistletoe on it's way to the Christmas market.

12-11-45

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SUBJECT: "Temperature--High or Low?" information from the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, U.S.Department of Agriculture

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Here's a bit of advice to the girl who's cooking her first big Christmas dinner. It's a tip on temperatures.

You'll chart your oven correctly--say food specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture--if you remember this rule."The larger the quantity of a food...the lower a temperature it needs for cooking."

For example...you can roast a chicken weighing 4 to 5 pounds in an oven registering 350 degrees Fahrenheit. But if you're roasting a turkey a very small turkey ...one weighing between 6 and 9 pounds..you will need an oven temperature of 325 degrees. And the bigger the turkey...the lower your oven temperature will need to be.

The same thing holds for baking a cake. You may have the oven as high as 375 degrees--that's moderately hot--for plain cup cakes...and about 10 degrees cooler for the same batter baked as layer cake. But if you're baking the cake in a loaf...the mass is bigger...and you need to set your oven at 325 degrees.

This tip on temperature is based on everyday common sense. If the oven is too hot...it will burn the outside of the turkey or the cake before the inside is thoroughly cooled.

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